

# The Academy

## A Weekly Review of Literature and Life.

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### The Literary Week.

IN our issue of October 13 we shall publish, following the plan of other years, classified lists of the new books that will be issued during the autumn season. As these voluminous lists will fill many pages of the ACADEMY, the issue in which they appear will be increased to about thrice the size of the ordinary number, and will contain, in addition, some special articles. The lists promise a deal of good reading. In the course of a leisurely glance through them—and such leisurely glances are not among the smallest delights of the bookman's life—we have jotted down the names of some of the volumes one looks forward to reading. They are :

Life and Letters of Huxley. Leonard Huxley.  
Life of Oliver Cromwell. John Morley.  
The Life of Gilbert White. R. Holt-White.  
Coventry Patmore: Memoirs and Correspondence. Basil Champneys.  
James Martineau: a Biography and Study. A. W. Jackson.  
The Day Book of John Stuart Blackie. A. S. Walker.  
Ephemera Critica. John Churton Collins.  
A History of Criticism. George Saintsbury.  
In the South Seas. R. L. Stevenson.  
The Old Familiar Faces. Theodore Watts-Dunton.  
A Little Tour in France. Henry James.  
The Man William Shakespeare. Frank Harris.  
Three Plays for Puritans. G. Bernard Shaw.  
With Christ at Sea. F. T. Bullen.  
The Amusements of Old London. W. B. Boulton.  
T. E. Brown's Collected Poems.  
The Unpublished and Uncollected Poems of Cowper.  
Mr. Quiller-Couch's Anthology of English Poetry.  
Tommy and Grizel. J. M. Barrie.  
Richard Yes-and-No. Maurice Hewlett.  
The Hearts Highway. Mary Wilkins.  
Lord Jim. Joseph Conrad.

ONE of the autumn announcements has an interest greater than its title suggests. This is *Biographia Presbyteriana*, by Patrick Walker, edited, with notes, by Dr. Hay Fleming, with an introduction by S. R. Crockett. *Biographia Presbyteriana* contains the Lives of Alexander Peden, Richard Cameron, Donald Cargill, and others, and the two volumes will be uniform with the Edinburgh edition of Stevenson. In one of his letters Stevenson says that he owes his style to Patrick Walker, indeed, he calls him his "real father in style," although Walker's name does not appear in that familiar passage where Stevenson describes how he "played the sedulous ape to Hazlitt, to Lamb, to Wordsworth, to Sir Thomas Browne, to Defoe, to Hawthorne, to Montaigne, to Baudelaire, and to Obermann."

THE list of literary Parliamentary candidates which we gave last week did not profess to be complete. We now add :

Dr. A. Conan Doyle, Unionist candidate for the Central Division of Edinburgh.  
Mr. Hubert Harry Longman, Liberal candidate for the Chertsey Division of Surrey.  
Mr. H. C. Cust, Conservative candidate for Bermondsey.

MR. ANTHONY HOPE's candidature for the Falkirk Burghs is already a thing of the past. Mr. Hope's health has broken down, and his condition is stated to be "somewhat serious." Although Mr. J. M. Barrie is not a candidate, there is an evident determination on the part of his friends to induce him to stand sooner or later.

ARE angels men? asks Mr. E. B. Triscott in the *Temple Magazine*, and points out that "all the angels one ever reads of are men." We give it up. The question belongs to the same doubt as Elia's: "Whether the higher orders of seraphs ever sneer." Meanwhile it may be noted that in Literature angels are usually men, in Art they are women. The reasons for the difference seem to be literary and artistic.

WE recently referred to a rumour, happily found to be quite baseless, which said that Mr. Holman Hunt's picture, "The Light of the World," had been destroyed as "heretical" by its owner. Its owner is Keble College, which has neither pronounced the picture heretical nor destroyed it. But, in reference to the general question of the safety of this picture raised in our columns by Mr. W. J. Stillman, we have received an interesting letter from Mr. Whitworth Wallis, Director of the Birmingham Art Gallery. Mr. Wallis considers that Mr. Stillman's disquieting doubts were well founded, and that the "scrupulous care" which several correspondents have assured us is bestowed on the picture at Oxford is of very recent date.

"IN fact," says Mr. Wallis, "no such scrupulous care has been shown; on the contrary, the famous picture has been badly treated, so much so that it was nearly destroyed by the heat of a flue over which it was placed. Mr. Hunt then, at his own expense, repaired what he told me was 'terrible damage.' Where the picture hangs now I do not know, but the authorities appear to take a delight in hindering the work from being seen. They have further made away with the artist's well-designed and modest frame in which it was first exhibited, and have substituted a new frame without the original title, 'The Light of the World,' and the text, 'Behold I stand,' &c., &c., but with a new text, 'Knock and it shall be opened.' This and other stupidities, as the talented artist wrote me, 'prove that if they did not of express purpose wish to destroy it, they have a determined prejudice against it.' Mr. Hunt was good enough to send me the above information when I was lecturing at the Royal Institution, Dublin, last year, as I thought it well to point out the treatment the celebrated work had received."

MR. WALLIS adds that if the Keble College authorities fail to appreciate the value and importance of the "Light of the World" he will be glad to receive it at Birmingham, and treat it with the unremitting care bestowed upon Hunt's other works in this institution: "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," "The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple," and "The Triumph of the Innocents."

THE recently published anthology of Canadian verse was, to say the truth, a somewhat weak and premature production; but real importance attaches to the forthcoming American anthology on which Mr. E. C. Stedman has long been at work. This anthology, we learn, will include the entire range of American poetry from 1787 to 1899, and opens with a full and carefully written introduction, which contains a survey of the entire course of American poetry, from its beginnings, in 1787, down to, and including, the closing years of the nineteenth century, with critical comments upon its successive phases. The book will contain short biographical notes on the authors quoted, which should add to the value and usefulness of the work.

THE *Northern Counties Magazine* is out at last. We like its neat grey covers and unpretentious mien. The price is sixpence. The contents are, of course, interesting chiefly to northerners, but Mr. A. Swinburne's verses, "Northumberland," make a wider appeal. We give ourselves the pleasure of quoting a few stanzas :

Between our eastward and our westward sea  
The narrowing strand  
Clasps close the noblest shore fame holds in fee  
Even here where English birth seals all men free—  
Northumberland.

O land beloved, where nought of legend's dream  
Outshines the truth,  
Where Joyous Gard, closed round with clouds that gleam  
For them that know thee not, can scarce but seem  
Too sweet for sooth,

Thy sons forget not, nor shall fame forget,  
The deed there done  
Before the walls whose fabled fame is yet  
A light too sweet and strong to rise and set  
With moon and sun.

Song bright as flash of swords or oars that shine  
Through fight or foam  
Stirs yet the blood thou hast given thy sons like wine  
To hail in each bright ballad hailed as thine  
One heart, one home.

Our Collingwood, though Nelson be not ours,  
By him shall stand  
Immortal, till those waifs of old world hours,  
Forgotten, leave uncrowned with bays and flowers  
Northumberland.

Not yet is the Editor of the *N. C. M.*, Mr. Howard Pease, represented by one of his racy Northumbrian stories, but Mr. Halliwell Sutcliffe's tale, "Dead Lad's Rigg," is sufficient in that line. It is very difficult to see why Sir William Eden is permitted to write at large on "Aspects of Modern Art" in a magazine which should be all racy of the soil that bred it. The Editor's statement to contributors, "North-country subjects preferred," should protect him from the general productions of magazinedom. We have good articles on Elswick, Bewcastle Cross, &c., and a North Country Chronicle which at present fills two pages, but which we hope will expand into ten. Mr. Pease may be congratulated, but we hope he will give to his magazine that "idiosyncracy all its own," which he claims that it must possess.

WE see with regret that the death is announced of Mr. W. E. Townsend, the brilliant young student-interpreter, whose account of the preparations made by the British Legation at Pekin just before the siege made such fine reading in the *Times*. Mr. Walter Ewen Townsend, the author of this letter, died at Yokohama last Sunday. He was but twenty-one years of age, and passed only last year into the China Consular service. Young Townsend's letter to his friends at home was quite a model of unsophisticated writing—to use a phrase which, though a

contradiction in terms, carries our meaning. He wrote, for example :

Great things are certainly in the air, and nobody knows what will happen next. I am so jolly glad that I got out here just when I did, or I would have missed all this fun. I am glad you sent me that revolver when you did—such things are greatly in demand just now, and it is always advisable to take one with you outside now. I lent it to Mrs. — last night and my shot gun to —, a fellow who happens to be up here, and had to arm myself with a beastly Government Martini. My post in case of attack is at a corner of the Legation wall, just outside my bedroom windows. I believe that all the ladies are to be sent off as soon as possible, which will be a relief, as we will then be able to enjoy ourselves freely without having to think of them. I bet some of them will kick like fun at having to go. We had an open-air service to-day in one of the big tinghrs, or arches, in the compound, and a jolly good sermon from Norris, one of the refugee missionaries.

A CEREMONY of some interest was performed the other day at Bath, when in continuation of the Corporation's scheme for marking the historic houses of the city Mr. W. Emerson, President of the Royal Institute of British Architects, unveiled upon houses in Gay-street and Queen-square tablets to the two Woods—father and son—whose combined genius did so much in imparting to modern Bath its architectural dignity. Among the buildings with which they enriched the city during the last century may be mentioned the Royal Crescent (immortalised by Dickens in *Pickwick Papers* as the scene of Mr. Winkle's midnight escapade with Mrs. Dowler), Queen-square, Gay-street, the famous Assembly Rooms, and the historic mansion of Prior Park on the outskirts of the city, which, during the lifetime of Ralph Allen, its founder, was the resort of the most famous men of letters and distinction of the day. The names of Pope, Mason, Hartley, Richardson, the painters Hoare and Gainsborough, Bishops Hurd, Sherlock, and Warburton, Lord Chatham and the younger Pitt, represent but a few of those who during the latter half of the last century were intimately associated with this classic spot, while Fielding was a regular guest when he lived near, and it is easy to recognise in Ralph Allen, the genial host, the Squire Allworthy in *Tom Jones*.

A VERY pleasing pocket edition of *Cranford* is now included in Messrs. Methuen's "Little Library." Mr. E. V. Lucas has supplied an introduction and many notes. In his introduction, which is an excellent blend of biography and criticism, Mr. Lucas disposes of certain doubtful analogies—and himself suggests a very sound one—between *Cranford* and other works of fiction. He says :

Lord Houghton, in estimating Mrs. Gaskell's work immediately after her death (in a brief notice in the *Pall Mall Gazette*), remarked of *Cranford* that it was "the purest piece of humoristic description that has been added to British literature since Charles Lamb"; but this was not very informing criticism. Some of the figures to which *Elia* gave life might have lived in the Cheshire town; it is true—Captain Jackson, in particular—but the association of Lamb with Mrs. Gaskell is confusing. They worked in different regions. Lamb sought for oddity in human nature; Mrs. Gaskell was far more interested in the norm. There is a writer now living who, if these parallels must be instituted, approaches the method of *Cranford* more nearly (without imitation or through conscious influence) than any predecessor of Mrs. Gaskell ever did. Those bibliophiles who practise the pleasant habit of ranging their books in sympathetic groups would find that *Margaret Ogilvy* falls into a place by *Cranford* very naturally and comfortably.

THE translation of Komensky's *Labyrinth of the World*, writes a correspondent, which Count Lütgen will probably have ready for the spring, ought to be an interesting book.

Komensky (better known under the Latin form of his name, Comenius) long enjoyed a European reputation for his attempt to give a scientific basis to education, but the *Labyrinth*, which was the imaginative and romantic work of his youth, is, in spite of a German translation, little known outside Bohemia. In Bohemia it is a national classic, and Komensky is a national hero. Every village has a "Komensky-street." He has been described as the Bunyan of Bohemia, but the *Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Labyrinth of the World*, except as regards their religious earnestness, are rather to be contrasted than compared. Komensky was in touch with a far wider world of knowledge than Bunyan's. For instance, he read everything which his great contemporary Bacon wrote. The Lütgen Chateau in Bohemia is only a few miles distant from the vast, lonely woods of Brandys, in which Komensky conceived the *Labyrinth* while he was hiding from his enemies.

In a recent issue we quoted a new Byron letter which was reproduced in facsimile by "C. K. S." in the *Sphere*. "C. K. S." now publishes a letter from Mr. Murray, who strongly suggests that this letter, which is now in the possession of Mr. Spencer, of Oxford-street, is a forgery. Mr. Murray says :

I dare say you are aware that a large number of letters were forged by a clever imitator of Byron's handwriting in the early part of the century.

This man also used to purchase books, write Byron's name in them, and make many marginal notes, &c.

Few men were better judges of Byronicana than my father, and even he was taken in once by these forgeries, and purchased a considerable number under the impression that they were genuine. He found out his mistake, and we have kept the books and papers as a warning and a standard to judge by.

I have copied out more of Byron's letters than any man now living, and may claim to have some knowledge of his handwriting. I am convinced that Mr. Spencer's letter is not genuine.

THE humours of examinations never pall, and we welcome a fresh batch, which Mr. E. M. Griffiths sends to the October *Longman's* under the title "A Study in School Jokes." Mr. Griffiths arranges his jokes under five heads. First, there are mistakes of spelling, multitudinous, and as a rule uninteresting, but yielding such treasures as :

The blood in the body is taken by means of tubs to the heart and there detained.

Stored in some trouser-house of mighty kings.

I came sore and conquered.

The second class is labelled "unsuccessful guessing." It gives us some amusing definitions :

Insulators are : 1. "Islanders." 2. "Machines used to freeze cream and other liquids to make ice." 3. "People who insult other people."

A buffer is : 1. "A thing that buffs." 2. "A hard blow." 3. "A wild animal." 4. "A kind of ox used to plough the fields in some countries."

And the following :

Q. "How did William I. put down the rebellions of the English?"

A. "He put them down in Domesday Book."

The third class is anachronisms, of which Mr. Griffiths remarks that "they show how difficult it is for the child-mind, 'moving about in worlds unrealised,' to grasp the idea that things were not always what they now are." Thus :

The priest of Midian reproved his daughter for not inviting Moses to come in to tea.

David boarded with the Witch of Endor.

When Moses' mother laid him in the ark among the bulrushes she did not forget to give the baby its bottle.

The next class of mistakes is one in which "the right idea . . . suffers some distortion when forced to clothe itself in the hard garb of black and white," as in these sentences :

A diplomat is some one who puts true things in a better light, which changes them and alters their sense.

Fiction is something which is believed in but which is nothing.

Lastly we have "howlers," pure and simple. Mr. Griffiths's collection includes these :

A watershed is a thing that when the soil in part of a river stands straight up on one side and slants tremendously the other side, the water is obliged to go up the soil on one side and come slanting down the other side—that is what they call a watershed.

About this time the Pope turned the bull-out of the church.

Roman citizenship was a ship on which the Romans went out fishing free of charge.

The Revival of Learning. Colet came into France and was much surprised to see how the people were all raving on learning; they wanted to learn Greek, so that they could read some more about the ancient Britons.

We are very grateful to Mr. Griffiths, whose good things we have only skimmed.

THE technics of writing are always interesting. A correspondent, whose name must be familiar to all our readers, remarks to us in a private letter :

. . . In that connexion I want to tell you an odd thing which is no concern of yours, but which yet might interest you. I believe there's a sense missing in me. There I give you an opening for a smile anyhow. I read of the literary men whose work I most admire, that it is endlessly polished, pruned, and sharpened after the first writing. I have often tried to do this sort of thing myself, but have failed signally. Each of my books, such as they are, I have written once, and once only, with hardly so much as a verbal alteration or amendment. . . . Is it not odd that I should be able to alter no word?

THE next Publishers' International Congress will be held at Leipsic in June of next year. The rights and interests of authors and publishers, as well as the technical questions of the trade, will be discussed. This will be the fourth meeting of the Association.

In reference to Mr. Omond's paper on "The Art of R. L. Stevenson" which we noticed in these columns last week, Mr. R. Shuddick points out that, notwithstanding the pains which Stevenson took to be accurate, they were often unsuccessful. He holds that Stevenson's errors when dealing with the ordinary affairs of life are often "glaring":

Take, for example, *The Wrong Box*, written in collaboration with Mr. Osbourne. This work contains many situations arising out of actions that are altogether at variance with law and custom. Here are three :

(1) A box containing a giantesque statue of Hercules is shipped from Italy to Southampton, from whence it is carried in the guard's van of a L. & S.W.R. train to Waterloo. In the same van is a water-butt containing the dead body of a man.

(2) Joseph Finsbury makes an assignment of his estate, but continues to draw cheques and bills, and receives payment for them across the bank counter.

(3) Finsbury is owing a sum of money to one Rodgerson on running a/c. Before it falls due Rodgerson assigns the debt to a Mr. Moss, who immediately calls on Finsbury and demands payment. Moss gets a cheque post-dated two months in settlement.

Rodgerson says to Finsbury, when explaining the sale of the debt :

"Well, I got cent. for cent. for it, on the nail, in a certified cheque."

"Cent. for cent. for it," cried Morris (Finsbury). "Why, that's—nearly 30 per cent. bonus. A singular thing; who's the party?"

With regard to—(1) A large case ex-ship would be carried by goods and not by passenger train.

(2) When a debtor makes an assignment he hands over everything to the trustee under the deed, who collects and pays all accounts.

(3) No business man in the whole city of London would give a post-dated cheque for an account that was not due for payment, and no business man could clearly follow the dialogue that I've quoted. What Finsbury means by "30 per cent. bonus" is quite a mystery, speaking from a commercial standpoint.

THE death of the *Elf* ("dead ere his prime") is no sooner chronicled than we receive the prospectus of a new monthly to be called the *Herb o' Grace*, whose editors dwell at Fairseat, Wrotham, Kent. The *Elf* was edited at Peartree Cottage, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent. Ah, these pretty men of Kent! Their intentions are delightful, but their productions too often perish in London air. What room is there here for anything frail, delicate, or sweetly-serious? The guffaws of reading-contractors answer "None!" Still the *Herb o' Grace* will unfold its leaves with the New Year. Its first number is to be dated on "the first Sunday of the first month of the first year of the New Century," and it will "plead, in the whirl and haste of a too complicated hour, for some return to a simpler life." We have heard that pleading so often! If the editors can find sufficient readers to enjoy it (the "pleading" not the "return") they will be fortunate. We shall certainly look at the *Herb o' Grace* with interest. We are promised "new poems, essays, tales and scenes, reflections and appreciations, reminders of forgotten books, and sundry translations from the works of great thinkers." So welcome the *Herb o' Grace* to a grimy world!

ALSO there is to be a new weekly, the *Onlooker*, which is to keep an eye upon politics, science, literature, fashion, and the arts. Hope springs eternal.

## Bibliographical.

THE work called *Representative English Comedies*, which is the product mainly of American hands, but which Messrs. Macmillan & Co. are to publish in this country, will be welcome to many. There is no other book, or series of books, in England, covering the same ground in precisely the same way. Of the five volumes of *The British Drama* issued in 1804 two were devoted to comedies which might fairly be called representative; but these volumes, of course, are out of print. Hundreds of English comedies are to be obtained in separate form, through either Mr. French or Mr. Dicks. For the student, however, there is at present no such help as *Representative English Comedies* should give him. There is much information and criticism on the subject in the *English Dramatic Literature* of Prof. Ward, and there is much sympathetic and illuminating comment in Hazlitt's *Comic Writers*; but of English comedy, as a whole, there has been, up to now, no systematic and critical history, with illustrative text, such as that which we are now told to look for shortly.

Mr. Hamilton W. Mabie, the American writer whose book on Shakespeare is to appear shortly, ought by this time to be tolerably well-known in this country. More than half-a-dozen volumes from his pen have been put into circulation over here. Copies of his *My Study Fire* were sent over in 1890, and in 1893 it found a London publisher—a second series appearing in 1894. In the same way, his *Under the Trees* and *Elsewhere* could be read in

England in 1891, and was formally published here in 1894 also. The years 1892 and 1895 were respectively those of the informal and formal publication here of his *Essays in Literary Interpretation*; while in 1896 and 1898 his *Books and Culture* went through the same process. His *Essays on Nature and Culture* belong to 1898; and his *The Life of the Spirit and Other Essays* came out last year. All of these should form a useful introduction for the *Shakespeare: Poet, Dramatist, and Man*.

Mr. Charles G. Harper continues to illustrate with pen and pencil the beauties, curiosities, and associations of our great provincial highways. First came, in 1892, his volume on *The Brighton Road*; then, in 1895, came *The Portsmouth Road and Its Tributaries*, and, likewise, *The Dover Road: Annals of an Ancient Turnpike*. In addition to these, Mr. Harper has given us *From Paddington to Penzance: a Summer Tramp* (1893), and *The Marches of Wales: Severn See to the Sands o' Dee* (1894). Now we are to have from him *The Great Northern Road*. Let us hope that Mr. Harper will not stop until he has dealt with all the great roads of the kingdom. He has made literary and pictorial topography a pleasant study.

A *Don Quixote* compressed and simplified for the use of youth—the thing does not, at first blush, seem attractive. The condensation might be pardoned, but why the simplification? Moreover, is Judge Parry, who has subjected *Don Quixote* to both processes, aware that the great classic has already been "adapted for young readers"? This publication appeared some eighteen years ago. About the same time came a selection from the *Wit and Wisdom of Don Quixote*; ten years later we were presented with a collection of Sancho Panza's proverbs; and four years ago *Don Quixote* positively gave its name to a Birthday Book! By this time "young readers" must have become tolerably well acquainted with it.

That we are to have the *Collected Poems* of T. E. Brown is good news, because it means that there will now be a chance of Brown's verse becoming known beyond the bounds of a limited circle. Brown published in succession *Fo'c'sle Yarns* (1881), *The Doctor, and Other Poems* (1887), *The Manx Witch, and Other Poems* (1889), and *Old John, and Other Poems* (1893); but by how many people, think you, are these volumes possessed? *The Doctor* was reprinted by itself in 1891 at half-a-crown: that may have introduced the author to some lovers of the *Belles Lettres*; and he had, of course, some sort of tribute paid to him in the *Leviathan Poets and Poetry of the Nineteenth Century*. The *Collected Poems* need not make a very bulky volume.

It would not be surprising if the promised *Day-Book of John Stuart Blackie* proved to be the most characteristic product of its author. The Professor published many books, but in none of them was there much of the quaintness and vigour of his public or private speech, in which he most revealed himself. Not even in his book on *Self-Culture* is there so much of the actual Blackie as was to be found always in his public discourse or his private talk. These were always fresh and racy. When he set to work on a book, Blackie became literary and ceased to be "a character."

I see that Bishop Boyd Carpenter is to give us a volume on *The Religious Spirit of the Poets*. It will be remembered that about twenty-five years ago Mr. Stopford Brooke produced a book on *Theology in the English Poets*. "Theology" and "religious spirit" are not precisely synonymous terms; but it will be interesting to note the respect in which the two works differ or agree in treatment.

Announcement is made in the publishers' lists of a volume of *Miscellanies* by Edward Fitzgerald, and of some *Stray Papers* by Thackeray. I trust that both books are "official"—i.e., countenanced by the "friends of the parties." Usually "stray papers" are best left in the obscurity to which their author consigned them.

THE BOOKWORM.

## Reviews.

T. E. B.

*Letters of Thomas Edward Brown.* Edited, with an Introductory Memoir, by Sidney T. Irwin. 2 vols. (A. Constable & Co. 12s.)

WHEN Mr. T. E. Brown died, in the autumn of 1897, we wrote :

His death removes from the slender ranks of modern poets the strongest, cleanest singer of them all. By the few who know and love his verses the loss will be deemed irreparable, so resolute and clear-sighted was he, so straightforward and joyous.

Speaking of him as a critic, we said :

He wrote little, but it was very good. His was the enthusiasm of the keen taster, who writes but seldom. The pity of it is that so many keen tasters have to write so much. He was moved to write by admiration of his subject; and where criticism in the hands of a wise man has this impulsion, it can be the best reading in the world.

The two volumes of his Letters, which have been edited, with an introductory memoir (this might have been better done) by his friend, Mr. Sidney T. Irwin, are invigorating reading: they have pith and marrow, and they reveal a personality so vigorous, so human, so sympathetic, that this poet-schoolmaster takes his rightful place among the few, intimate, friends of the bookshelf.

Schoolmaster and clergyman, yet he was not a man of affairs: his external life was entirely uneventful. He was born in the Isle of Man in 1830; there the latter years of his life were spent; there among his books, with the heather and the mountains at his door, and the kindly faces of the peasants greeting him on his daily rambles—there were centred his affections. Also he had his friends. For many years during the middle period of his life he held masterships at Gloucester and at Clifton College, but by inclination and practice he was poet and man of letters. He was not of those who repine and grumble at the tasks the world imposes. There was his own interior life to live—and he lived it nobly. Those were no idle words that at the age of sixty-three he wrote to an old Cliftonian :

My plan always was to recognise two lives as necessary—the one the outer kapelistic life of drudgery, the other the inner and cherished life of the spirit. It is true that the one has a tendency to kill the other, but it must not, and you must see that it does not.

To that "inner and cherished life of the spirit" his passion for Nature ministered royally; while still at Clifton he had told in the stirring lyric called "Clifton" how the natural things stayed with him and stirred in his blood :

I'm here in Clifton, grinding at the mill  
My feet for thrice nine barren years have trod,  
But there are rocks and waves at Scarlett still,  
And gorse runs riot in Glen Chass—thank God !  
  
Pragmatic fibs surround my soul and bate it,  
With measured phrase that asks the assenting nod;  
I rise, and say the bitter thing and bate it,  
But Wordsworth's castle's still at Peel—thank God !

He was a man of simple tastes and habits; a great walker ("I have had a very blessed ramble on Sliu Whallian. Soothing, re-integrating, restoring the moral balance, making me young and lusty as an eagle"); a musician; a life-long learner of poetry by heart; a preacher of sermons; but, above all, he was a man of letters, with a fine, scholarly taste, and, rarer still, the gift of literary expression in a marked degree. His style is not for all, with its short, arresting sentences, its classical tags, its pepper of words that have fallen into desuetude, and its thought often packed tight as the cotton on a reel. But it was the man—the style of a lonely man, whose mind

fed on itself and on the past, never on its contemporaries. And, like another, he liked the flick of a slang phrase on the top of an heroic period. Unlike Stevenson, however, he rarely, in his letters, analysed his craft or gossiped about the mechanics of it, for he was the amateur to the end. He was always himself; he looked at books and life through his own eyes—and keen, penetrating eyes they were. It is this that gives such value to his views on books ancient and modern. He approaches a volume as if he were the first man to open the covers. His utterance was direct—"gleg at the uptak," too, was he. We may not agree, for example, with his denunciation of Mr. Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*; but his views on this, as on other matters, compel respect and attention. *Tess* moved him to an explosion of wrath not usual with him; but in later letters he relents a little: "I don't see *power* in the book, but I do note considerable beauty in parts."

I can only account for the latter part of *Tess* as a deliberate imitation of the cruelty and defiance of the common sentiment which I find so rampant in Maupassant. It is true the satire of this tremendous person is terrific, but so cold-blooded. By-the-bye, can satire be cold-blooded? That is more like irony. Yes, he uses irony, but for the purposes of satire. Juvenal never cools down to this point of venomous, deadly sting, this cobra of horror. He gives vent to his *stevo indignatio*. Not so Maupassant: he never turns a hair, and on you go! I think his *Bel Ami* one of the most brilliant and annihilating works. A very devil! But, somewhere behind, there is a God, a God that hisses at his own creation, and spits upon the hurly-burly that has escaped from his hands.

He had his day of "my French hobby." What could be better than this on Flaubert's *Bouvard et Pécuchet*?

After all, do you think *Bouvard et Pécuchet* was his centre of gravity? I fancy it was a marvellously happy *tentamen* in a new direction: but I must consider the *Bovary* and the *L'Education sentimentale* the essential Flaubert. Casting about for the adequate expression, he made two great dives which were not in the line of his proper motion. One was *Salammbô*, the other *Bouvard et Pécuchet*. They are both magnificent, both quite at right angles to the true Flaubert who walks straight on in the absolutely real life of the *Bovary*. He amazes one with his *Bouvard et Pécuchet*. It is as if a dying man suddenly started up a convulsive athlete, a buffoon of the first rank, and he says, "There! I can do that too! You didn't expect it! No?" and a shrug and a shiver, and he falls dead.

His friends sent him the works of certain modern writers, and he spoke his mind freely—very freely on occasion. He thought *The Prisoner of Zenda* "ridiculous rubbish," and he could speak of "the depth, the reach, the grip, the electric energy, the universal truth" of *The Manxman*. But when he liked a thing he said so with vigour. He never yawned. Hugo gripped him, and he dashed this off :

Victor Hugo! I am one of the Hugo-maniacs, absolutely certain that there has been no poet like him since Shakespeare. It is very curious, is it not? how absolutely certain we Hugonians feel about this. It seems to me quite amazing that it is not universally recognised. I know that I ought not to be amazed; but I assure you that I am, most unfeignedly.

When he read Petrarch (*Rime*) "all through, the first time I ever did that," he bounded into this :

Petrarch has sap in him. How all the generations have sucked the juice! There can be no mistake about it. Hang the coffin! *apricos necte flores*: and let them be a garland for grey hairs, but not for death! I believe in the art of medicine rather than in that of surgery as applied to the soul. We must have faith; put into you good and gracious and salubrious things, and somehow or other they shall sweeten your blood, making it perfumed, ichorian. I could write a prescription. *Recipe Petrarchi viii. &c., &c. . . . Capiat.* Fill it up as you will.

Daudet revealed the ambition of this enthusiast of sixty-three :

But I never tire of Daudet's *Lettres de mon Moulin*. You know the short story called "Les Vieux." Ah, that is exactly what I would fain write! Such a merest trifle, but such ineffable loveliness. Doubtless you have read it: you will at once recollect it, when I quote the phrase, "Bon jour braves gens! je suis l'ami de Maurice." The quality! the quality! Oh, do let us aim at that; it is everything. And to think that it should seem so casual, just a drop amongst a thousand others, when it is really the *gutta serena* of a priceless pearl that doesn't drop at all. These things delight me, but they also depress me. They don't perplex me at all. I quite see how natural it is for certain minds to energise in this way: but then I can't; and that is settled for ever, and probably was settled some fifty years ago. In your case, it is not settled. Strive, strive to enter in at the strait gate! Even I (madman that I am!) have not yet given up all endeavour, utterly as I have abandoned hope. The endeavour is to write one poor story of about five, nor more than ten pages, that the world will not willingly let die. What say you? Shall we go in for this? Shall we get the little bit of canvas, and stretch it on an easel that shall be slender as *les fils de la bonne Vierge*, but strong as adamant?

Weir of Hermiston caught his enthusiasm at the flood :

Weir of Hermiston I take to be the most consummate thing that has been written for many years. Don't you agree with me? THAT WOMAN—not Mrs. Weir, though she is marvellously good, but the humble relative who occupies the place of chief and confidential servant!!! No one but a Soot can enter into this character. That I am able so thoroughly to feel it, I consider the strongest proof of my Scottish origin. Such a woman! And yet they said Stevenson couldn't draw a woman. And the passion of love—yes, love; yes, *passion*—the positive quasi-sexual (or shall I drop the *quasi*?) longing for the young Hermiston. Good God! what depth! what truth! what purity! what nobility! If the century runs out upon this final chord, what more do I want? Let me die with the sough of it in my ears. It is enough: *nunc dimittis, Domine*. You will go on to other joys: the coming century will bring them to you. But to me—well, well, all right. In heaven I will bless you, Louis Stevenson.

But modern books were only the sweets of Brown's literary menu. He read the classics as most of us read the newspapers, day by day, browsing on a volume when he had a spare hour. One day it is the *Orlando Furioso*—"Have you read it? I think the hard enamel of this Italian reprobate pleases me better than Spenser with his soft velvet carpet, on which you walk ankle-deep in the mass of yielding allegory"; another day it is Swift—"The hearty cursing in his *Tale of a Tub* goes straight to my midriff—so satisfying, the best of tonics"; then Aristophanes—"He has got hold of me. I am reading the Birds. It is simply a portent of vigour and health"; then Danto—"I am at him for the *whath* (!) time. Few joys are to be compared with this"—and so on, and so on. The years never brought satiety or dulled the palate of this ardent bookman.

But T. E. B. was much more than a bookman. He was a poet—some know that well—and he had the seeing eye and the quick comprehension, the heritage of the few. He could phrase an impression or sketch in a character with the best. His letters are full of such memorabilia. And if they seem more vivid than most prose, remember it was a poet who wrote them. It was a poet who wrote this from Italy :

A girl on the Como boat (Whitsun Monday, festa folk) was a marvel of physical beauty. With her was her lover, not handsome, and a goose. But who would not have been a goose for such a face? Still, of tenderness not one suggestion—all fire, and not celestial fire either. Ah, goose! goose! poor singed goose! onion-stuffed perchance! what fate will be his with that splendid salamander?

An awful climate, isn't it?

A terrible soil that seems to throw out these human pomegranate blooms in a moment. She looked as if she had just been born—bless her—and her goose! nay, a goose must take care of himself. Very different from this fire angel, flame-winged, literally burning coal of beauty, with her pretensions, her mantilla, her ready, prompt meeting of all eyes, was an absolutely celestial creature, that I met the other day, bearing her big basket, containing manure (I think). This girl smiled at me, a distinct good sweet smile—now is it not marvellous? At me. Just like a flower—she saw me before her, no other man—and it was necessary to smile. Derision? Good God! no: like the flowers, Duft, pollen—you know about those things; a natural and most wholesome and lovable expansion. The eyes were of a colour which I cannot determine, and I like such eyes; the fact is, they look at you, they melt down through the whole gamut of colour and leave off with a tongue of the softer fire.

He could paint a scene with a few brush marks. Here is a picture of a congregation from the preacher's point of view :

The church bursting with fire and bright faces: entering at the west door, it looked like a tunnel of flame. The churchyard too was full, a curiously eager "company of witnesses" glowering in upon me. I don't know how to describe it, except by saying that it gave one the idea of a Cyclopic spiritual smithy, of which I myself was the smith, and the good old parson the bellows-blower. Out flew the sparks, and these blessed old Kelts caught them in their fine raptured faces as children do looking in upon the smitten anvil.

We hope we have said enough to send readers to these stimulating volumes, a purpose which can best be served by quoting from them freely, as we have done. In these times of upheavals, whirling views, chameleon opinions, and counsels of despair, the life of such a man is a beacon: his thought was clear, wholesome, virile, and joyous; he accepted his temperament with a cheer; and he valued above all things nature, books, his friends, and his soul's freedom. He knew himself, and his philosophy stood the test of years. A while before his death he wrote :

In my life I have been so much alone, it cannot be helped. Where is the comrade? I never had one. The absolute self is far within, and no one can reach it. I will not cant, but God reaches it, and He only. I used to envy the surface people, obviously happy, and in their happiness *all there*, so to speak, the full complete presence of one being to another—no, it is not for men of a certain temperament. Yet we love candour, sincerity, thoroughness, and would fain saturate ourselves with free communication. Poor old Emerson and his over and under soul, he was not far wrong. His friend Carlyle broke down the division habitually—smashed the two souls into one great smudge of discontent. I would not do this. Keep them both going separately. A strong man has strength enough to do this, and all his surroundings benefit thereby. Moreover, in a sweet ancillary way they reflect upon us their sunshine.

#### An Acting Play.

*Savonarola: a Drama.* By W. J. Dawson. (Grant Richards. 3s. 6d.)

MR. DAWSON, in remarking that he intends this drama as "an acting play," states that "the great figure of Savonarola is one of the most dramatic in history." It may be so; but Mr. Dawson could scarcely have chosen a great figure the incidents of whose career were less suited for theatrical representation. Doubtless the author was captivated by the spiritual intensity, the Apocalyptic flamboyance, the almost hysterical enthusiasm of Savonarola; and it is, of course, very satisfactory to find an author seriously attacking so high and so difficult a theme. Nevertheless Mr. Dawson, who would appear to be quite inexperienced in the technique of the theatre, has been victimised, artistically, by his admiration for the Patriot,

Reformer, and Ascetic. And, moreover, from a chance word which he lets fall, we imagine that his attitude towards the stage is somewhat peculiar, for a dramatist. He writes: "I cannot doubt that in the hands of an efficient actor the character of Savonarola might be interpreted after a fashion that should fulfil the best canons of art without in the slightest degree transgressing against the reverence due to the religious aims of Savonarola's career." We seem to catch in that phrase some echo of the polemics of the County Council Licensing Session.

Mr. Dawson's drama is in prose and blank verse, and in four acts; so far as we can discover, it extends over a period of about a quarter of a century, though on the face of it only nine years are accounted for. Feeling instinctively that his theme was lacking in suitable material, Mr. Dawson has provided Savonarola with a love affair. In the first act we find the hero profoundly enamoured of Felice Strozzi, but ignominiously refused by the lady's father. Felice fruitlessly haunts the play to the end, "in a nun's garb." We do not object to a reasonable exercise of the dramatist's licence, but we think that Mr. Dawson has gone much too far in making this disappointment in love the mainspring of Savonarola's religious career. Immediately after his interview with Strozzi, Savonarola talks with his mother:

SAVONAROLA.

[*Rising from the lute.*] Yes, mother, you are right. We are about to part. All the world has come to an end with me to-day.

HELENA.

Why, what has happened? You went out happy this morning?

SAVONAROLA.

This morning is a long time ago. Mother, have you ever seen the storm-cloud in the Apennines? One moment all is bright, and the next a great black curtain falls over the world, and the thunder calls like a threatening voice among the hills. So the storm-cloud has come upon me. I am alone in the impenetrable darkness. There is a narrow path beneath my feet; it leads up and up, past the Calvary upon the hill, past all the tall crosses on which the pale Christ watches me; up, I know not whither; and yet I know that I must follow this road to the end.

Men of Savonarola's stamp must surely be urged towards their destinies by something more cogent than the inability to obtain a father-in-law.

Mr. Dawson has made fairly good use of the interview between Savonarola and the dying Lorenzo the Magnificent (narrated by Pico de Mirandola, but scarcely a "matter of history"); and the first scene of Act IV., where Savonarola masters a dangerous mob by his eloquence, combined with the happy intervention of a thunder-storm, is also neatly and effectively contrived. We will quote the climax of his speech:

See, the sky is dark,  
Already thunder moans along the hills—  
Ah, there the lightning flasht—the sword of God!  
Thunder of God, behold I challenge thee!  
If I have wrought unjustly, if by word  
Or deed against this people I have sinned,  
Let God's wrath fall upon me in one flame,  
Let His bolt smite me, riving me in twain,  
As it doth rive the too presumptuous oak  
That crowns some proud and heaven-daring hill!

[*The thunder rolls louder. The people groan.*  
Hark, how the brazen wheels of God resound  
Along the roads of heaven! He draweth nigh,  
Dreadful in power, many-charioted,  
With all the thousand thousand of His saints.

[*A blaze of lightning.*  
Now shall the doors eternal be lift up!  
As in the far-off Apennines there bursts  
The winter-flood, even so the mighty wave,  
Crested with tossing helms and wheeling swords  
Of angel and archangel, rank on rank  
Rolled endless, fills the heavens, and earth dismayed  
Shudders with fear thro' all her heart immense.

[*A burst of thunder.*

That is Mr. Dawson at his best. The remainder of the play is too slight and too episodic. Indeed, scarcely anywhere does the author show a real aptitude for drama. His blank verse is never more than respectable, and his prose has even less distinction. Phrases like "You do but jest," "It cannot be," "Bandy no words with me," "Sir Scholar," "Sir Poet," are utterly effete at this time of day, and when they are juxtaposed with locutions such as "I don't half like it" and "Not in my line," the resulting effect is rather bizarre. Still, to publish a play requires pluck. Mr. Dawson has that.

### Wales at Large.

*The Welsh People.* By John Rhys, M.A., and David Brynmor-Jones, LL.B. (Fisher Unwin.)

THIS valuable study, strong alike on the side of actuality and on that of erudition, is an outcome of the Welsh Land Commission. It is a more solid outcome than many Royal Commissions find. The authors were themselves Commissioners, and they conceived the happy idea of working up the historical sections of the Report for which they were primarily responsible into a form at once more popular and more permanent than that of a Blue Book. These sections, together with a valuable chapter on the history of land tenure in Wales, also contributed to the Report by Mr. Frederic Seebohm, LL.D., are the nucleus of the present volume. But they have been considerably altered; much new matter has been added; and the authority of the book is now personal rather than official.

The first three chapters deal mainly with the question of ethnology, and for the treatment of this subject it may be assumed that Prof. Rhys is chiefly responsible. The theory of a pre-Aryan population of these islands, to which he has previously committed himself, is argued at considerable length, and with great learning. On the philological side, at least, it is a most exhaustive statement of the case. The earliest Aryan-speaking dwellers in Britain were undeniably Celts. And of Celtic immigration two successive waves can be traced. The first was probably determined by the great Celtic movements on the Continent during the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. It brought a flood of Celts belonging to the Goidelic branch of the race. The Goidels are sometimes known as Q-Celts, from the fact that in their language, represented by modern Irish and Gaelic, a *Qu* sound, which another branch labialised, or turned into a *P* sound, still survived. The second immigration may be dated in about the second century B.C. It consisted of Brythonic or P-Celts. The Brythons drove the Goidels, probably the more civilised, but far less warlike, people, westwards, into Ireland and the rocky fastnesses of North and South Wales. A wedge of Brythons drove itself through Central Wales to the sea, and some tribes even crossed the Irish Channel. Then began, both in Ireland and Wales, a linguistic struggle between the Goidelic and Brythonic dialects. In Ireland the few Brythonic settlers were linguistically submerged, and learnt to speak Irish. In Wales, on the other hand, the Goidelic tongue continued, up to a comparatively recent date, to hold its own in North and South Wales, side by side with the Brythonic Welsh of Central Wales, to which at last it had to give place. It is on the differences between these two branches of the Celtic speech that Prof. Rhys founds his theory of a pre-Aryan population. Goidelic, he believes, is an Aryan tongue, considerably modified, but more in syntax than in vocabulary, by contact with a non-Aryan people. This people he considers to have been a race of aborigines whom the Goidels found here, and with whom they had practically merged during the centuries that intervened before the Brythonic immigration. The Brythons are, therefore, for him pure Aryan Celts, the Goidels a race mixed both as to

blood and speech, of which the constituent elements are partly Aryan Celtic and partly non-Aryan. He also thinks that some of the non-Aryan inhabitants survived in Scotland in an un-Celticised state, and that in these are to be found the Picts of history. With the assistance of a careful linguistic essay by Mr. J. Morris Jones, he attempts to show, further, that the non-Aryan tongue which influenced Goidelic was probably one having affinities to Berber, Egyptian, Basque, a group of tongues belonging to the Mediterranean basin. All this philological matter seems to us exceedingly well argued, and a real contribution to one of the vexed questions of European anthropology. We are a little less satisfied with a subsidiary line of argument, in which Prof. Rhys attempts to find the non-Aryan element in some fragments of Goidelic mythology and personal nomenclature, which seem to point to an old custom of reckoning kinship through the mother and not through the father. For, as Mr. Lang pointed out in his recent *History of Scotland*, it is by no means so certain as Prof. Rhys assumes it to be that kinship through the mother is not a stage through which the Aryan peoples themselves passed. On the other hand, Prof. Rhys might have considerably strengthened his position by correlating his philological results with those arrived at on other than philological grounds by many contemporary anthropologists. He makes no use, for instance, of the evidence from craniology, or of that afforded by the existence of two well-marked physical types in the Celtic-speaking districts of to-day. The small dark Celt and the tall blonde, or, perhaps, more frequently red, Celt surely point in their juxtaposition to a double ancestry. One can hardly hesitate to identify Prof. Rhys's pre-Aryan or Pictish folk with the *Homo meridionalis* of anthropology, the slight dark man who dwelt on both sides of the Mediterranean and throughout Western Europe in the neolithic age; whose bones fill the "long barrows" of this country; who developed the Aegean and early Italian civilisations; whose speech has been already conjectured to survive in Basque and Berber; and who, though he has learnt the Aryan tongues from the blonde invaders of the North, still forms the substratum of all the populations of Southern Europe.

If the earlier chapters of *The Welsh People* are principally of interest to the philologer and the ethnologist, those that follow appeal to a more varied class of readers. They include an outline of Welsh history from the beginning of things to the present day, a picture of Welsh civilisation as it stood in the twelfth century, just before the conquest by Edward I., Mr. Seeböhm's essay on Welsh land tenure already referred to, and a series of closing monographs on "The Religious Movement," "The Educational Movement," "Language and Literature" and "Rural Wales at the Present Day." The last chapter, in particular, is full of the most interesting details of farm life gathered together from the statements made by witnesses before the Land Commission. Wales is a poor country, and the living even of the farmers is described by witness after witness as very hard. "There are many farmers who cannot afford to get a piece of fresh meat once a year," says one: and another, speaking rather of his childhood than of the present day:

For dinner you will see a small farmer have half a salt herring (very poor food for a working man): his wife and family must content themselves with butter-milk and potatoes, or, perhaps, after the farmer has finished his part herring there will be a scramble amongst the youngsters for the bones to suck as a treat. They sometimes have a little skim-milk cheese with oatmeal bread, some, better off than others, bacon.

Things have, however, improved, if it is improvement, in this respect, and there are farms where the unmarried hands "insist on meat and tarts and pudding at dinner." Characteristic Welsh dishes are *pieus mali* or "shot," a compound of bruised oatmeal cake and butter-milk,

*flummery*, made of oatmeal soaked to sourness, and *sucan*, which is much the same as *flummery*. Welsh dress has long been assimilated to that of England. The high-crowned hat of the Welsh peasant woman some half a century ago was but a survival of a type of headgear familiar in the England of the Stuarts. The suggestion is made that originally the Brythons wore *bracae* or "breeches," and the Goidels a short apron or kilt like that of the Highland clansmen. Such a garment is displayed by figures on sculptured Welsh stones, apparently of Goidelic origin, and it was known to the primitive Goidels of Ireland as well as those of Scotland. Some mediaeval sketches of Welsh soldiers show them, singularly enough, with only one shoe, worn on the left foot. The authors think that a modern Welsh woman, in the quarry districts, dresses with "a natural taste, a sense of colour and proportion which may be sometimes looked for in vain in ladies of a higher position in life in England." This is very possible. As in mediaeval Europe generally, and in the Verona of "Romeo and Juliet" in particular, courtship is largely carried on by night. The Welsh name for the custom is *enocio* or *streicio*. The lover taps at his mistress's window, and, if he pleases her, is admitted into the house, where the pair sit up together. There is a similar usage in other parts of England, and it seems to be universal among the Boers of South Africa.

#### Mark's New Way.

*The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg, &c.* By Mark Twain. (Chatto & Windus. 6s.)

MARK TWAIN, censor and critic, is rapidly taking the place of Mark Twain, fun-maker. But the change need not be deplored, for the new Mark Twain—the Mark Twain of this book in particular—is not a whit less readable than the old, and he is more provocative of thought. And perhaps more than ever is the term humorist applicable; but now meaning one who smilingly understands his kind, rather than of one who merely makes them laugh. But we do not think that it is a good book, all the same, because, like most of Mark Twain's work, it is shapeless and very unequal. Cheek by jowl with such an excellent satire as the title story and such an admirable piece of self-revelation as "My Military Campaign," a valuable reminiscence of the American Civil War fever and its effect on some minds, we have a handful of fugitive scraps from the magazines, little bits of articles not worth reprinting. But Mark Twain is too old an offender in this way for us to scold him now: he has always thrown his wares with both hands, and, after all, there is such a largeness about the man, such a fine, honest independence and so vivid an interest in human nature, that it really matters very little that the gift of self-criticism was, to a large extent, denied him. So much remains to take its place.

The best things in the book we have named. After these the most interesting contributions are the inquiries into Christian Science and into the present state of the Jews. Mark Twain, though he disapproves of Mrs. Eddy with gusto, is yet forced to believe in the future of her creed and, to a large extent, in its efficacy. From "Concerning the Jews" we may quote one passage. "What has become of the Golden Rule?" some one asked Mark Twain, referring to the persecution of the Jews. This is the answer:

It exists, it continues to sparkle, and is well taken care of. It is Exhibit A in the Church's assets, and we pull it out every Sunday and give it an airing. But you are not permitted to try to smuggle it into this discussion, where it is irrelevant and would not feel at home. It is strictly religious furniture, like an acolyte, or a contribution-plate,

or any of those things. It has never been intruded into business; and Jewish persecution is not a religious passion, it is a business passion.

Mark Twain, now that he has given up purely funny yarns, remains as the one man (barring Mr. Dooley) who is encouraged or permitted to say things like this. It is well that someone is on hand to do so.

But Mark Twain has a little of the old frivolity left. In this work will be found a pretty piece of fooling called "The Esquimaux Maiden's Romance," a satirical sidelight on the relativity of wealth; a monstrous invention concerning Millet, the painter of "The Angelus"; and a most diverting translation into literal English of a French translation of "The Jumping Frog."

One grumbling word: it is time that Mark Twain gave the humours of lying a rest. In future let human nature's incapacity or unwillingness to tell the truth be taken as read: we are a little tired of jokes on so threadbare a topic.

## Other New Books.

**JOHN RUSKIN:**  
A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH. BY R. ED. PENGELLY.

This little volume is not a rival to that of Mrs. Meynell. Mr. Pengelly does not trouble himself with the inwardness of Ruskin's writings, with the correctness of his aesthetic standpoint, with the philosophical and social ideals implicit or explicit in his work, with the permanent value of his studies in the cause and cure of civilisation. But he has compiled, from *Fors Clavigera*, from *Praterita*, and from Mr. Collingwood's biography, a gossipy record of the external circumstances of Ruskin's life, which may possibly find its audience among those who prefer gossip about great men to their works. Mr. Pengelly's original contribution to his subject consists of a few extracts from unpublished letters, apparently written to Mr. Henry Jowett, a member of the firm of Messrs. Hazell, Watson & Viney, who were Ruskin's printers. They are of no very great account, but not uncharacteristic. In one Ruskin complains of "the bestial egotism of the public," who would write to him on business that was not his. Another is a rather pathetic record of distressing infirmities gallantly borne:

MY DEAR J.—I am getting under sail again—steadily—the chief harm remaining is a sprained wrist, got in fighting one of my men nurses: if the doctor only had had the common sense to get some women nurses, I should have been as quiet as a baby—quieter than most babies I know. But it hurts me in writing still badly. I had the satisfaction of leaving all my keepers rather dilapidated—but it was the worst illness I've had for the pain and sorrow of its fancies.—Ever affectionately yours,

J. R.

On Ruskin's Oxford career Mr. Pengelly rather oddly comments. "Senior Wrangler he knew he could never be; but he felt that he could write poetry, and he meant to achieve what he had set out to do." Naturally Ruskin could never be Senior Wrangler—at Oxford! (Melrose.)

**HANDBOOK TO CHRISTIAN AND ECCLESIASTICAL ROME.**  
BY M. A. R. TUKER AND HOPE MALLESON.

Two parts of this handbook, dealing respectively with "The Christian Monuments in Rome" and "The Liturgy in Rome," have already appeared. The present, and final, instalment, covering "Monasticism in Rome" and "Ecclesiastical Rome," completes the work. Alike to the mere tourist, who desires to be able readily to identify the hundred and eight religious costumes which meet him in the streets of Rome, and to the student puzzled by the intricate ceremonial of the Vatican, or the elaborate divisions and sub-divisions of the great Orders, it may be highly commended. The arrangement is lucid, and

the learning is real and based upon the best authorities. In particular, the account of the rise and growth of monasticism is an excellent sketch, quite free from the triteness of an ordinary guide-book. There are some good illustrations, including a score of the more important religious habits, plans of the Vatican and of a typical Carthusian cell, the arms of the Popes, and so forth. Under the head of "Monasticism" the authors give details of the history, costume, and way of life of the various orders of monks, friars, canons, sisters of charity, and clerks regular. Under that of "Ecclesiastical Rome" they describe the organisation of the Vatican and the functions and privileges of the Pope, the Cardinals, and the various ecclesiastical orders. A full account of the Sistine chapel, the library, and the other buildings of the Vatican is included. (Black.)

**COLERIDGE'S THE RIME OF THE  
ANCIENT MARINER.**

ILLUSTRATED BY  
HERBERT COLE.

The critic's business with this presentation of Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* is with the illustrations, these being the only addition to the text. We do not think that Mr. Cole's efforts are wholly successful, but then he has essayed a most difficult task. The more important illustrations are etchings, and these are cleanly pieces of work. As interpretations, the *Ancient Mariner* stopping "one of three," in the frontispiece, seems to us to lack power; he suggests a poor old man desperately demanding a shilling. It surprises us, too, that Mr. Cole elected to illustrate the line, "He holds him with his skinny hand," instead of the line in the next verse, "He holds him with his glittering eye." This surely was the moment to seize; on the power of his eye depended the *Ancient Mariner's* audience. But Mr. Cole's efforts are obviously careful, and in his etching of Death and the woman playing dice on the spectreship Coleridge's weird imagination seems really to find the assistance of art. The book is very elegantly produced. (Gay & Bird.)

**WILD SPORTS OF BURMA  
AND ASSAM.**

BY COLONEL POLLOK AND  
W. S. THOM.

Colonel Pollok was the pioneer of big game shooting in Lower Burma, and what he did for Lower Burma was done for Upper by Mr. Thom. Both were busy men, Colonel Pollok being of the Staff Corps, Mr. Thom Assistant District Superintendent of Police; but with that characteristic passion for dangerous sport which Englishmen carry with them, all over the world, as part of their necessary outfit, they succeeded in finding time for an enormous amount of slaying. The spirit of these records, which consist mainly of extracts from diaries, is admirably simple and free, and there is nowhere the smallest attempt either at fine writing or blood-curdling adornment. We have bare statements of facts, no more; there are thrills in plenty, but these are not produced by the art of the writers. It is a compliment to them to say that they have no art of the pen; theirs was the art of resource, of wire nerves, of the steady eye:

I was not twenty-one years old [says Colonel Pollok] when I went to Burma: I possessed the constitution of a buffalo, I had private means of my own, and drew exceptionally good pay from Government, and I was, to all intents and purposes, my own master.

With this happy equipment Colonel Pollok began his career as a big game sportsman, shooting, as a rule, from elephants, which the nature of the country made necessary. The range of sport in Lower Burma is unusually wide; there are tigers, leopards and panthers, the buffalo, rhinoceros, gaur, gayal, and tsine; of the deer tribe some half dozen varieties. Of the rhinoceros Colonel Pollok states that in Assam forty-four fell to his own gun, and that he lost, wounded, as many as he killed. In Upper Burma Mr. Thom was responsible for twenty-two elephants. It

is interesting to note that Colonel Pollok altogether discredits the legend that man-eating tigers are old and mangy brutes who take to homicide when they are unable to pull down game or cattle; his experience is that they are often young, sleek, and particularly vicious. There is, we believe, a theory which seeks to account for the manginess on the score of the deleteriousness of human flesh on the tiger's constitution; but this would not manifest itself until the brute had taken a long course of his unholy diet.

There could hardly be a better guide, to those who contemplate a year or two's big game shooting, than this book. The sportsman in Upper and Lower Burma and Assam will find a glut of game hardly, now, to be found elsewhere, and the climate is by no means deadly to men who take reasonable care of themselves. Mr. Thom gives an exhaustive summary of a complete outfit, from servants to meat-saws, from coffee-extract to "battery." So equipped, and with a pliant banking account, let the keen sportsman take ship for Rangoon and thence sail up the Irrawaddy to Mandalay. (Hurst & Blackett. 16s. net.)

ALTDORFER.

BY P. STURGE MOORE.

This study of the "Little Albrecht" is sympathetic and well informed, though somewhat rambling in manner and marred by digressions. In a volume where narrowness of space should suggest compression we could very well spare such a question as this: "And now can we not reform this demand, that art should seek to improve, by saying that art seeks to reveal beauty, and that contemplation of beauty exhilarates, refines, and elevates?" Of course, one of the objects of art is to reveal beauty; we are not aware that it has ever been seriously disputed. It is as though one should ask, May we not say that bread is intended for food?

Altdorfer was born towards the end of the fifteenth century, probably about 1480, and was registered a burgher of Ratisbon in 1505. His life was lived during a period of noble traditions in art, and his career was happy and successful. Burgher patrons, rich and complacent, swarmed in Ratisbon. Altdorfer's work was wonderfully fresh and buoyant, but we are not quite convinced that it was truly great: its occasional dignity of conception appears fortuitous, almost, one might say, an accident of his theme rather than an essential radiating to its utmost limits. But Altdorfer has his place, and that no low one, in the roll of artists who wrought faithfully and with a sense of beauty serenely confident. (Unicorn Press. 2s. 6d. net.)

LORD ELGIN'S  
SECOND EMBASSY TO CHINA  
IN 1860.

BY THE LATE  
HENRY BROUGHAM LOCH  
(LORD LOCH).

There is a terrible vitality in the story of human suffering, and it is not surprising that Lord Loch's account of his detention in a Chinese criminal prison should have brought the "personal narrative" containing it into the third edition. An advertisement of the first edition appears, by the way, in the third number of the ACADEMY. Lord Loch's work was held, at the time it came out, to afford excellent evidence of the Abbé Huc's representation of Chinese character and manners. It will be remembered that Mr. Loch (as he then was) was taken prisoner in violation of a flag of truce and incarcerated in a gaol in Pekin. It was a fearful experience. He had been so tightly bound that on his arrival at the gaol he had lost all sensation in his left hand, and he probably owed the reanimation of the member to a hair of the dog that bit him.

Just as they were about to clasp the irons on my wrist they observed the ring on my finger. . . . It excited the cupidity of one of the gaolers, who, finding in the then swollen state of my hand that it could not be got off,

rubbed and sucked my finger in his mouth, muncing it gently with his teeth until it was sufficiently softened to get the ring off.

Thus the circulation was restored.

Among its sad traditions the *Times* can have none sadder than the death of its correspondent Bowlby, who perished in a manner too horrible to set forth here, through his excessive zeal for their readers.

At this date it is not perhaps unfair to suggest that, since the cause of Lord Elgin's second embassy was practically the violation of the treaty of Tien-Tsin in 1858, it was scarcely logical of the authorities to allow Mr. Loch, Mr. Parkes, and their comrades to put their heads into the jaws of a dragon thus proved untrustworthy.

For the rest, this narrative throws into relief the curious irresponsibility of the Chinese. They will kick a prisoner one moment and politely put his hat on his head the next. They will load him with chains and thrust him in an insect-infested den, and then, if he asks for water, they give him a nice cup of tea. They are experts alike in the superciliousness of the Southern planter of the slave-days and the grovelling humility of a convicted Monmouth. They vacillate through fear until they itch with evil intentions. They lie because they believe that to lie is functional. Lord Loch believed in their capacity for "great things if wisely governed"—so his widow tells us. One is tempted to believe he was sorry to see them taught wisdom by the destruction of a palace such as the Yuen-Ming-Yuen, and one fails to understand how they could have learned anything but injustice by the conduct of the Allies at Peh-tang, where the inhabitants were ejected from their homes, with the consequence of "an immense amount of suffering."

The moral of the book is obvious—no European should allow himself to be "bottled up" in Chinese China. Chinese promises are Chinese—which is a drawback. (Murray. 2s. 6d. net.)

## Fiction.

*The Soft Side.* By Henry James.  
(Methuen. 6s.)

MR. JAMES's later manner is more difficult than his earlier, and there are critics in a hurry who find in this a symptom of sheer perversity. But they err—these critics err; rather, to be precise, they intrude. Because such stories are not written for them. First they are written for Mr. James; incidentally a few friends are invited to enjoy them—patient, alert spirits, full of faith. For it is not at the first excursion that you reap the reward of your—yes—labour. The landscape at first view is about as intelligible as to the wandering cockney is one of Turner's water-colour sketches. Too often "she wonderfully answered," "she magnificently said," is the handle of a remark at which we can but glare in vain for a hint of what we have magnificently missed. There are moments when you are tempted to doubt whether perhaps it is not just a game of bluff that the Master is unworthily playing—whether in particular this and that upon which you lay a denunciatory finger does not in fact mean just nothing at all. But if you hang on to it like grim death, as one of Mrs. James's astonishing ladies might say, queer lines and scratches and splashes do focus themselves into a picture. Line by line, interjection by interjection the dialogue comes to life; and just beyond the plane of the print real people suffer and act. And what a queer lot they are! So like the people one knows, yet so altogether different—more definite, more real! And their strange mixed jargon that is neither slang nor literature, but partakes of the qualities of both—the freshness of the one, the felicity of the other.

With regard to the dozen of tales contained in this

volume we are unable to say what it is in virtue of their having precisely in common their author has invented for the book the title it bears. Some figure there must be in the carpet, but we decline to commit ourselves to a description of it. Individually "The Great Condition" takes one back to earlier days and "The Siege of London"; so, a little, does "Miss Gunton of Poughkeepsie." "The Given Case" is in manner contemporary with *The Awkward Age*. "Maud-Evelyn" is of the *Two Magics* stamp; so is "The Real Right Thing." "John Delavoy" is a singular picture of the perfect magazine-maker: "There was not a thing in the world—with a single exception, on which I shall presently touch—that he valued for itself, and not a scrap he knew about anything save whether or no it would do. To 'do' with Mr. Beston was to do for *The Cynosure*. The wonder was that he could know that of things of which he knew nothing else whatever." The restfullest story in the world is "The Great Good Place"; life, as you read it, is tepid and pale-green. It is the creation, by reflex activity, of a brain harassed by the recurring obligation to unloose with tired fingers the little, tight, hard knots of the meshes of professional and social duty:

Oh, the deep, deep bath, the soft coolplash in the stillness!—this, time after time, as if under regular treatment a sublimated German "cure" was the vivid name for his luxury. The inner life woke up again, and it was the inner life, for people of his generation, victims of the modern madness, mere maniacal extension and motion, that was returning health. He had talked of independence and written of it, but what a cold, flat word it had been! This was the wordless fact itself—the uncontested possession of the long, sweet, stupid day. . . . Slowly and blissfully he read into the general wealth of his comfort all the particular absences of which it was composed. One by one he touched, as it were, all the things it was such rapture to be without.

"The Tree of Knowledge" tells of a sculptor who can't, and a loving circle that sacrifices itself to maintain his delusion that he can. The other stories are "The Abasement of the Northmores," "Europe," "Paste." The first treats of the posthumous Nemesis that made merry with the reputation of a pompous Success. "Europe" we are not sure that we have mastered. As to "Paste," if Mr. James had not thought it good to do, we should have doubted whether it was intrinsically worth while. Being done, it becomes its own justification.

*The Courtesy Dame.* By R. Murray Gilchrist.  
(William Heinemann. 6s.)

MR. GILCHRIST'S present fame is that of a short story-writer. If we except *The Rue Bargain*, which was a novelette in dimensions, the whole of his best work is comprised in some fifty short stories. Now he comes forward with a proper novel. It was decidedly an adventure on his part to write a novel, for his aptitude for the short-story form is so plain that it might well have excluded an aptitude for any other form. The adventure, however, is a success. Considered as a technical achievement, *The Courtesy Dame* shows few flaws or shortcomings. It is admirably constructed, well wrought, and thoroughly homogeneous. Mr. Gilchrist's theatre is again the Peak district of Derbyshire, but the characters are less simply rustic than he has accustomed us to. In the beginning of the book Lord Beston, that ailing, but fiercely masculine, peer, puts up at an inn on his travels, and rescues therefrom a beautiful scullery-wench, Anne Witchett. This girl with the singularly pretty name becomes the heroine of the tale. Lord Beston takes her on the European tour, and arranges her education. She returns with him to his Peakland home, and quite excusably the neighbourhood calls her the courtesy dame; the Bestons had been addicted to courtesy dames. The

relations of these two were, nevertheless, pure, and remained pure, till Lord Beston expired of his incurable complaint, and she on his breast. He had wished her to marry, first an illegitimate connexion of his own, Stanley Palfreyman (offspring of a previous Beston's courtesy dame), and then the old lover of her kitchen days, Whittingham. But she would have neither.

Mr. Gilchrist in this book has imposed a drama factually improbable, but full of essential truths, upon a background of rural life and character. That any kitchen-wench could be transformed into the adorable, lightsome, strong-souled creature which the author has drawn we cannot believe; and we cannot believe that any Lord Beston and any Anne Witchett could behave quite as these behaved. The charm of the book never flowers gaudily in a phrase, for Mr. Gilchrist deals not in phrases. Rather, it dawns quietly on the mind at the end of a chapter or an episode.

There are many country episodes to which we might refer—of harvests, fairs, carol-singings, courtings, and all the broad, simple, communal life of a self-contained district—but space forbids. We will say, in conclusion, that *The Courtesy Dame* is a notable book.

*FitzJames.* By Lilian Street.  
(Methuen & Co. 6s.)

THIS, which is quite the briefest six-shilling novel that we have seen, appears to have been written for the young woman of eighteen or so with a luscious-passionate temperament and a tendency to French. It is Ouida simplified. French phrases like *camaraderie*, *ce soir*, *demain*, *d-mi-voix*, *ma chère*, and *éperdument amoureux* (for which the English language has, of course, no equivalent) ornament nearly every page. The hero is gorgeous:

Galt FitzJames was in his forties. Known far and wide as a poet, a consummate artist, and critic, he was greatly loved and greatly feared. He had an atmosphere that was unique, electric, stimulating; and the secret lay not so much in his genius power as in his bewildering personality. He was kind and gay, splendid and gallant, fierce and self-mocking. His humorous eyes were dark blue; he was clean-shaven; his features irregular and strong; his big head he carried high; his hair was iron-grey. In figure he was tall and imposing. . . .

Stories were rife of his forty years, and some, when they touched on bitter suffering, passionate struggle, and unconquerable courage, were not far short of the truth. Others, told to prove he was mortal, never by one iota lessened the dignity of his character.

But this was not all. He was a compelling god at the piano:

Ruth, at the window, begged for Chopin. Chopin was a mystery to her, and instinctively she knew this other poet would discover him.

But it was Galt FitzJames that reached her in the music—not FitzJames the genius and hero she had worshipped from girlhood, but FitzJames the man. . . . He drew her, drew her to him . . . and she felt herself going gladly, gladly. . . . There was nothing else possible . . . possible. . . . He stopped, and she clutched at the window-fastening, faint and dizzy.

Subsequently Ruth nursed him through a delirium, and said that another woman had done it—an impossible "Milly" who gambled at Monte Carlo while her husband lay dying. In the end, however, FitzJames discovered the truth, and we are led to believe that Ruth had the ecstasy of matrimonially accepting the hand of the great poet, artist, critic, and musician, with all his dizzying qualities.

The story is ridiculous, but it is ridiculous in a perfectly simple and unaffected manner. Approach it in the proper spirit, and you will enjoy it.

## Notes on Novels.

[These notes on the week's Fiction are not necessarily final. Reviews of a selection will follow.]

## A BREAKER OF LAWS.

By W. PETT RIDGE.

The cover of Mr. Ridge's new story is adorned with a criminal's coat-of-arms—a shield on which are impaled a dark lantern, a pair of handcuffs, a bunch of skeleton keys, &c.; and the story opens delightfully with a comic burglary at Blackheath by Mr. Alfred Bateson—with whose fortunes and with whose "own little Keroline" the book is concerned. (Harper's. 6s.)

## THE DEVIL'S HALF-ACRE.

By "ALIEN."

The opening scenes of "Alien's" new novel are laid in the Otago goldfields, where John Jermyn, an unconfessed and unsuspected murderer, has tried to expiate his crime, labouring to save life as an atonement for one taken. He is conducting a camp-meeting, to which the leading characters stray. (Unwin. 6s.)

## CYNTHIA IN THE WEST.

By CHARLES LEE.

A clever story of artist life in Cornwall, by the author of *The Widow Woman*. We are introduced to a regular colony of artists, and to some capital native types. Old Sampy's views on impressionism are entertaining. "Mr. Gibbs, he painted a picksher last year—picksher av a gate 'twas, and a man standing by. Gate was all right—drawed proper, that gate was—five bars all complete; as pretty a gate as ever I see. But the man! If you'll believe me, that man hadn't got no face!—no nose, no mouth, no eyes, no nothing—just a dollop av yaller paint." (Grant Richards. 6s.)

## PHILIP WINWOOD.

By ROBERT NEILSON STEPHENS.

The sub-title of this novel is explanatory in the good old-fashioned way: "A Sketch of the Domestic History of an American Captain in the War of Independence; Embracing Events that Occurred between and during the Years 1763 and 1786, in New York and London: written by His Enemy in War, Herbert Russell, Lieutenant in the Loyalist Forces." There are five good illustrations, a portrait of the hero, and a few notes at the end. (Chatto. 6s.)

## IN MALE ATTIRE.

By JOSEPH HATTON.

The title of this story by the author of that capital piece of melodrama, *By Order of the Czar*, promises adventure and incident. The first few pages fulfil that promise, for we have Zella Brunnen defending herself in a lonely New York street against a drunken ruffian's bowie knife. This is only the first thrill. Others lurk under such chapter headings as "And Jealousy Winked at Murder," "The Fateful Festival of Blind Man's Drift," "Zella Leaves Prudent's Gulch for London," &c., &c. A stirring story of to-day. (Hutchinson. 6s.)

## THE MARBLE FACE.

By G. COLMORE.

Creepy was the word for the author's *Strange Story of Hester Wynne*. Creepy is the word for this story of a blighted life and a marble face, in which mystery broods over all. The story is taken alternately from "The Diary of Darnley Cottrel" and "The Narrative of Laura Lequesnay." (Smith, Elder. 6s.)

## KATHLEEN.

By MRS. G. FORSYTH GRANT.

An immense novel of visits, balls, small talk, diversified by a carriage accident, and culminating in a cricket match. The characters move about in solid blocks: "The Vernon household," "the Wood family," "the Traquair family," "the Cochrances," "the Ainslies." When they are excited they say, "Blow you!" or "Jehoshaphat!" The hero is credited with a mania for quoting Shakespeare, though he seldom does so. "Frailty, thy name is woman!"

quoted Ronald, his eyes fixed upon Kathleen. "Shakespeare says that, and St. Jerominy! he's jolly well right!" The story is laid in Edinburgh. (Paisley: Alex. Gardner. 6s.)

## DAUNAY'S TOWER.

By ADELINE SERGEANT.

A will story. The will—Stephen Daunay's—of course miscarries, and there is an important and mysterious child, who grows more beautiful every day in the remote Cumberland village where the story is laid. The plot is well worked out. Two of the heroines are named, like Poe's creations, Annabel and Lenore, and there is something Poesque about Daunay's Tower itself, in its heterogeneous vastness, looming in the night and breathing old traditions. (F. V. White. 6s.)

## THE VICAR'S ATONEMENT.

By J. HARWARD PONTING.

The atonements of vicars are popular, we believe, in fiction. This unhappy cleric is married in the second chapter. He does not tell his bride that it is for the second time, nor that his first wife had eloped from him, and was drowned. The acted lie becomes dangerous, even at the altar, where, under the veil of his bride, he sees, by hallucination, the lineaments of Mary Brandon. For his improbable secrecy the vicar pays an improbable price in suffering; the drowned wife turns up; there is a murder; and a theatrical "atonement." (Marshall & Son. 6s.)

## A SUBURBAN VENDETTA.

By JOHN K. LEYS.

"'It will come,' said the General, 'if at all, on the tenth of June.'" The General referred to a peril that had hung over him and his since Mutiny days, when—it goes without saying—he had tried to rob a Hindoo temple of its jewels. Hence the vendetta, and the interest surrounding the Rajah of Nagore when he arrives as guest at Seacombe Towers and promptly proposes to the General's daughter. If "Forewarned" and "Trapped" did not appear as chapter headings in this story we should marvel, but they do. (Pearson. 6s.)

## THE DISHONOUR OF FRANK SCOTT.

By M. HAMILTON.

Frank Scott's dishonour arose out of his absent-minded infatuation for one young woman what time he was engaged to another. It was a bad case, and Frank's cowardice went to the length of concealing from one woman his marriage to the other. The developments are, of course, tragical. (Hurst & Blackett. 6s.)

## MAB.

By HARRY LINDSAY.

Mr. Lindsay's field is Methodist life, with its bigotries and sanctities, upon which some rude breath of the world is usually allowed to play. Thus Mab, a foundling of the sea, is Methodised as long as possible by her foster-parents. She becomes an actress, loses her sight, achieves success as an author, and is re-Methodised, cured of her blindness, and married to a minister amid the gruff plaudits of old bronzed fishermen like Zadok Parrington. A good story of its type. (Horace Marshall & Son. 6s.)

## WAGES.

By L. T. MEADE.

Mrs. Meade's present concern is with the evil of surreptitious drug-taking by neurotic Society women. Morphia and eau-de-cologne, brandy and laudanum, do their fell work in these pages; and the lesson is heightened by the circumstance that the hero, a Harley-street specialist in nerve diseases, is himself a victim. (Nisbet. 6s.)

## THE CROSS TRIUMPHANT.

By FLORENCE M. KINGSLEY.

This story, by the author of *Paul*, opens seventeen years after the Crucifixion, and embraces the over-running of Palestine by Vespasian, with its attendant horrors. (Ward, Lock. 3s. 6d.)

## THE ACADEMY.

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## The Author of "The Master-Christian."

## An Enquiry.

SIZE is the quality which most strongly and surely appeals to the imagination of the multitude. Of all modern monuments, the Eiffel Tower and the Big Wheel have aroused the most genuine curiosity and admiration: they are the biggest. As with this monstrous architecture of metals, so with the fabric of ideas and emotions: the attention of the whole crowd can only be caught by an audacious hugeness, an eye-smiting enormity of dimensions so gross as to be nearly physical. The unrivalled vogue of Miss Marie Corelli is partly due to the fact that her inventive faculty has always ranged easily and unafraid amid the largest things. Even in the early days, a single world did not suffice her fancy; she needed two. Then, when humanity had proved too small a field, she dreamt of a divine tragedy, and awoke to conjure up the devil. After the devil, the devil's antithesis: it was bound to come, and it has come. Barabbas, Satan, Christ: who can say that there will not yet be a fourth term to this gigantic proportion sum?

The daring brain which could conceive Jesus making the European tour at the heels of a Cardinal of the Roman Church has used no half-measures in the execution of the idea. If the theme is immense, crude, and obviously staggering, the treatment suits it. Unite the colossal with the gaudy, and you will not achieve the sublime; but, unless you are deterred by humility and a sense of humour, you may persuade yourself that you have done so, and certainly most people will credit you with the genuine feat. Such is the case of Miss Corelli and *The Master Christian*. From the moment when the good Cardinal Felix Bonpré finds the Divine Child, Manuel, shivering under the barred porch of Rouen Cathedral, to the grand climax of that same Child dialectically withering the Pope in the Vatican, there is no intermission of "big" situations. Manuel works miracles, curing lameness, stopping and annihilating bullets, and even raising the dead. He ascends the tower of Notre Dame, and stretches out his arms toward the city. "What dost thou see?" asks the good Cardinal.

"Paris!" replied the boy in strangely sorrowful accents, his young, wistful face turning towards the Cardinal, his hair blown back in the light wind. "All Paris!"

He was about to see a lecherous priest, worth five millions of francs, all but murdered by his illegitimate son before a churchful of *cocottes*. Later, Manuel journeys on to Rome. He and the Cardinal discuss the sights:

"St. Peter's!" answered Manuel, with a thrill of passion in his voice as he uttered the name. "St. Peter's—the huge theatre misnamed a church! Oh, dear friend!—do not look at me thus. . . . Surely you must know that there is nothing of the loving God in that vast Cruelty of a place. . . . Oh, what a loneliness is that of Christ in the world! What a second Agony in Gethsemane!"

In the Vatican, Manuel, not stopping at words, proceeds to glances:

"As One having authority—and not as the scribes!" said Manuel, with a swift, flashing glance, which, like a shaft of lightning, seemed to pierce through flesh and bone; for, as he met that radiant and commanding look, the jewel-like eyes of the Pope lost their lustre and became fixed and glassy—he put his hand to his throat with a choking gasp for breath—and, like a dead body which had only been kept in place by some secret mechanical action, he fell back in his chair senseless, his limbs stretching themselves out with a convulsive shudder into stark immovability.

Coming to London, Manuel presided at the heavenly translation of the good Cardinal, and arranged there for "a marvellous vision!—a Dream of Angels."

"Manuel!"

"I am here," answered the clear young voice. "Be not afraid!"

And now the music of the unseen choir of sound seemed to grow deeper and fuller and grander, and Felix Bonpré, caught up, as it were, out of all earthly surroundings . . . saw the bare building around him beginning to wondrously change . . .

So much for Manuel. As the author says, "The personality of the little fellow was intensely winning." In regard to the human characters, they are sharply divided into two groups—the sheep and the goats. To be a sheep is to possess striking artistic and personal gifts; to be a goat is to have mistresses and bastards: there is no middle course; a middle course leads neither to the colossal nor the gaudy. Angela Sovrani, the heroine, was the greatest (moral) painter of her time, and, "unlike any other woman in the world," "a creature apart," "true, womanly in every delicate sentiment, fancy, and feeling, but with something of the man-hero in her scorn of petty aims." "Her laughter, sweet and low, thrilled the air with a sense of music." She painted a symbolic canvas, entitled "The Coming of Christ," which the United States nation bought, by cable, for a hundred thousand dollars. Her *fiancé*, an Italian prince, and also a painter (with a paramour), killed her out of artistic jealousy, and Manuel brought her to life again. Aubrey Leigh, the *jeune premier*, was "a brilliant scholar," and an ardent democrat; he would have become "supreme in histrionic art" had he not been repelled from the theatre by "the painted drabs called 'ladies of the stage'." He was "the finest shot in England," and could improvise divinely on the organ. He wrote a book, and "found himself—like Byron—famous." He also "flung thunderbolts of splendid defiance at shams, with the manner of a young Ajax defying the lightning." He fell in love with one Sylvie Hermenstein, and Sylvie, "who seemed, by her graceful and *mignon* fascinations and elegant toilettes, just a butterfly of fashion and no more, was truly of a dreamy and poetic nature—she had read very deeply, and the griefs and joys of humanity presented an ever-varying problem to her refined and penetrative mind." Mdlle. Hermenstein had a literary friend, the Princesse D'Agramont, and "the *Figaro* snatched eagerly at everything" written by this lady; while Angela had a literary friend, Cyril, "a daring writer who has sent his assumed name of 'Gys Grandit' like a flame through Europe."

The goats of the narrative are, with the exception of Angela's *fiancé* and a curate, all Roman Catholic priests, the book itself being, *inter alia*, what the gifted authoress intends for an exposure of the Roman Catholic Church. Angela's *fiancé* kept a mistress. The curate declined to bury the child of a hapless girl whom he had seduced. The catalogue of sinful priests is a long one. The Abbé Vergniaud was father to the flame-like "Gys Grandit." Claude Cazeau, an Archbishop's secretary, seduced a girl named Marguerite; she went mad of her shame; one night she grappled with him ("he turned

a livid white in the moonrays"), and they perished together in the Seine. Monsignor Gherardi, that powerful and august prelate, had a *petite maison*, "a superb villa, furnished with every modern luxury and convenience, . . . where a beautiful Neapolitan *danseuse* condescended to live as his mistress." Gherardi also made infamous proposals to Sylvie Hermenstein, "in low, fierce accents"; but, later, when "Gys Grandit" crushed him in argument by referring to his family of bastards, "he reeled back as though he had been dealt a sudden blow, and over his face came a terrible change, like the grey pallor of creeping paralysis."

Perhaps the most wonderful thing about this book is that the author has faith in her work. By a thousand indications we are convinced that she truly believes it to be sublime. *The Master Christian* is a perfectly honest revelation of a personality. Egotistic, theatrical, vindictive, obtuse, and perhaps vain, that personality is nevertheless not a mean one. It is distinguished by a ferocious hatred of shams and by an earnestness almost terrible. Miss Corelli has the not-ignoble passions of the reformer. She must tilt or she will die. That her tiltings are farcically futile is due neither to lack of energy nor lack of sincerity, nor diffidence in attack, nor doubts, but simply to a complete absence of humour and artistic feeling, and her rhapsodic ignorance of life. Invincibly self-possessed and self-satisfied, conscious of power, and, above all, conscious of rectitude, she revels gorgeously in her lyric mastery of the commonplace, deeming it genius, and finds in the fracas of pamphleteering fiction an outlet and satisfaction for all her desires.

Such a personality could not fail to arouse opposition, and, indeed, the feud which exists between Miss Corelli and those who actively interest themselves in modern literary art may be accounted for without difficulty. It is due not to the appalling and absolute wrongness and badness of Miss Corelli's books considered as works of art, but to the authority and acceptance which she has achieved among the multitude. Try as you may to ignore the multitude you cannot. Numbers will tell, and it is right that they should. There is not a writer living to-day who does not envy Miss Corelli her circulation; and it is just that circulation which the artists of literature cannot understand. Is it possible, they ask in sad and angry amazement, that people can be imposed on by *this*? And they have an impulse to fling down the pen and take to grocery. But of course it is possible! That the question should be put only shows that in the world of books, as in every other world, one half does not know how the other half lives. In literary matters the literate seldom suspect the extreme simplicity and *naïveté* of the illiterate. They wilfully blind themselves to it; they are afraid to face it. Let us point out here that the wants of those readers who happen to be without taste are seldom met exactly, for the reason that nearly every writer has some sort of taste, some feeling for the refinements of his art. The readers without taste usually read, therefore, work which is a little beyond their proper grasp. They do the best they can for themselves, but their normal reading condition is one of muddle and mystification, more or less acute. When an author comes along who can exercise force, fluency, and sincerity at the bidding of preferences precisely similar to their own, then it is that the illiterate gather together, and by the shoutings of their acclamation make themselves so painfully obvious to the literate. Then it is that the literate, awakened to the realities of the world, cry: Is it possible? Is it possible that Miss Corelli is regarded by tens of thousands of people as a profound philosopher and a beautiful writer? Let them ponder the two following passages:

The toy called the biograph, which reflects pictures for us in a dazzling and moving continuity, so that we can see scenes of human life in action, is merely a hint to us that every scene of every life is reflected in a ceaseless moving panorama *Somewhere in the Universe*, for the beholding of *Someone*—yes!—there must be *Someone* who

so elects to look upon everything, or such possibilities of reflected scenes would not be—inasmuch as nothing exists without a Cause for existence.

Angela did not reply—her hands had unconsciously wandered into the mazes of a rich Beethoven voluntary, and the notes, firm, grand, and harmonious, rolled out on the silence with a warm, deep tenderness that thrilled the air as with a rhythmic beat of angels' wings.

Let the literates ponder those two passages, and assimilate the stupendous fact that there are multitudes of persons—you can see them in the streets behaving quite nicely—who will accept the one passage for profound philosophy and the other for beautiful writing. And, perhaps, the fact is not so stupendous after all, but just an ordinary, self-evident fact, one of a series. The very man who is shocked that "people" should be deceived by *The Master Christian*, may himself be the ignorant victim of a kind of music or a kind of painting not superior to the kind of literature to which *The Master Christian* belongs.

It has been stated that this huge fiction (it contains a quarter of a million of words—especially such words as sublimity, majesty, radiance, flashing, infinitely, thrilled, indefinite, elfin, *Hélas!* luminance, grand, exquisite, frightful, overwhelming) has succeeded—in the commercial sense—beyond any other English novel ever published at six shillings or any other price. That success, however, had been reached before the public had read a line of the book, and was due partly to the author's previous works, partly to splendid advertisement, and mainly to the official assertion, some time ago, that Miss Corelli had not written a novel entitled *The Sins of Christ*. But let us grant that the book has found favour with the majority of its purchasers; let us say that a hundred thousand immortal souls have been truly refreshed by it. This vast army of the simplicities would comprise the following classes:

1. (Overlapping the other classes.) Those who accept the gaudy colossal for the sublime.

2. Those who never miss "disclosures" about the Roman Catholic Church, who attend lectures by escaped nuns, and who say Romish when they mean Roman.

3. Those who only condescend to read fiction which "teaches," and who would doubtless be uplifted by the didactic harangues which the leading characters are made to declaim at every crisis in the story.

4. Those who enjoy witnessing any sort of "attack," even a street-fight.

5. Those neutral and sheepish minds who always contrive to like what a sufficient number of others like.

It remains to say that these persons might have favoured a more contemptible book. *The Master Christian* is absurd past all telling, but it has homogeneity, and with such a tremendous theme and scene, only a distinctly clever and audacious brain could have achieved that most difficult quality. The thing is serious and sincere; it shows a creditable and rare interest in large affairs; it is no mere weaving of a set pattern in fiction, such as contents many writers of genuine fine talent. It is ridiculous, but it is alive. And if you have no sense of the ridiculous, if you belong to the hundred thousand, you may well regard it as an impressive and magisterial work.

## Things Seen.

### The English Way.

He came into the restaurant car on a German railway, let the door slam behind him, smiled, sniffed, said "Oh!" and threw open one of the windows. We stared, for a German railway, where every station-master suggests imminent martial law, is not the place for the flaunting of an independent spirit. We—a little company of various nationalities, united only by a tacit servility to wait

patiently till it should please the waiter to attend to our wants—stared. The new-comer, a mere boy, but tall, treated the place as if it were a Duchy and he the Duke of it. He tucked his long legs under a table, and shouted in a high, pleasant voice: “*Kellner!*” to which, after a few seconds, he added the word *schnell!* Those were the only two German words he knew, and he used them frequently, with varying degrees of emphasis. Strange to say, the waiter answered the call, and took his leisurely order. He gave him his entire attention, just as if the boy were a duke and we subjects. His dinner was served while we still waited, and while he ate I talked to him. He had been with his “people” at Homberg, and now he was on his way back to a public school in England. Later he was going into the Army. This he told me while he ate his dinner, and chirped criticisms of German ways. When he had finished his meal, he threw himself back in his chair and cried: “*Kellner, bill! schnell!*” The waiter heard, and came to him, down the whole length of the carriage. The bill was presented. “Look here,” said the boy, “the service is bad. I’m going to back this bill.” He wrote his complaint (it was not very well spelt) in a large, round caligraphy, folded it, and dropped the document into the official box attached to the wall. Then he rose, said: “Bring my coffee into the smoking-room,” smiled generally at the company, and strolled to the door. He paused there a moment, said: “Look here, *schnell*,” and disappeared.

I began my dinner. I ruminated. His behaviour was inexcusable, and yet—. Well, he carried it off. It was not underbred—it was English. I ruminated, and thought of the map of Africa and the domination that was spreading down from the North and up from the South. I did not approve, but, as I ate my tardy dinner, I think I understood—the English way.

#### At Sea.

LAST night a woman in the steerage died, and this afternoon she was to be buried. It was a day of fog and fine rain, with a chill in the air that made one’s bones feel brittle. The sea was a dirty gray, fading at a hundred yards into dull white mist.

The body lay on a hatching, wrapped in a Union Jack, for she was an Englishwoman coming home. There was nothing garish in the broad bands of colour, and down at her feet was a swelling beneath the cloth that we knew was a forty-pound shot. Round the hatching was a ring of sailors, bare-headed men with bronzed faces, the name of the ship written in white across their blue jerseys. Behind them stood a crowd of passengers, the men with their hats in their hands, fingering the brim; the women with shawls over their heads.

Suddenly the engines stopped. A strange stillness ensued. The only sound came from the water washing along the smooth iron side.

Somewhere in the crowd a baby wailed, and I saw a woman whispering to something she held hidden under her red shawl. Then a priest came forward, a black velvet cap on his head, and mumbled some prayers—in Latin, I thought, but his voice was very low. He finished, and stood aside. The sailors stooped, carried the hatching to the side, and tilted it. There was a moment’s pause, and then the bundle shot overboard. It was a great drop to the water. The bundle struck the water flat, with a great splash. There was a sound in the crowd like a sudden drawing in of breath. Suddenly, far overhead, the fog-horn burred, and at the same moment the bell jangled in the engine-room for full speed ahead. I felt the wire rigging in my hand tremble at the first drive of the piston.

#### An Enthusiasm that Was.

TWENTY-FOUR years ago, being a boy of twelve, I carried sundry coins to Mr. Franklin’s bookshop at the corner of St. Nicholas’s-square, in Newcastle-on-Tyne, and exchanged them for a copy of the *Critical and Historical Essays* of Lord Macaulay. I could show you the very spot in Neville-street where, walking homeward, I stopped to take a deep draught of rhetoric from that podgy volume in a gamboge binding. Has justice been done to Macaulay as the literary mentor of boys under fourteen? I doubt it, the debt is so large. There is a class of books from which bookish boys draw their first literary nourishment, and although these books are not the same for every boy, yet there are certain books which really form a group of this nature. Washington Irving’s *Sketch Book* is one, and Macaulay’s *Essays* is another. From these, and from Lamb, and from Addison’s *Spectator*, boys draw green knowledge of the moods and capabilities of literature. They learn how sarcasm can gall its victims, or argument crush them; and hugely they enjoy such spectacles. They easily delight themselves with the broad effects of good prose: a flowing style, a richness of allusion, clever antithesis, ingenious similes. Moreover they learn names—nothing haunts a boy like names—and on these they build castles of surmise very pleasant to behold. Great among such writers is Macaulay of the *Essays*. I could have said this last week, but it was only yesterday that I realised how strong was the spell that Macaulay threw over me in that gamboge volume. Casually I had picked up the new edition of the *Essays* issued in the “Temple Classics” series, and casually I opened it at a page in the article on Machiavelli. To my no small astonishment I could hardly read it with a dry eye. For I had alighted on a passage which I had roared to the wind on sea-shores, in railway-carriages, and wherever the glory of words could add a joy to life, or relieve some boyish bitterness. The passage was this:

From the oppressions of illiterate masters, and the sufferings of a degraded peasantry, it is delightful to turn to the opulent and enlightened States of Italy, to the vast and magnificent cities, the ports, the arsenals, the villas, the museums, the libraries, the marts filled with every article of comfort or luxury, the factories swarming with artisans, the Apennines covered with rich cultivation up to their very summits, the Po wafting the harvests of Lombardy to the granaries of Venice, and carrying back the silks of Bengal and the furs of Siberia to the palaces of Milan. With peculiar pleasure every cultivated mind must repose on the fair, the happy, the glorious Florence, the halls which rang with the mirth of Pulci, the cell where twinkled the midnight lamp of Politian, the statues on which the young eyes of Michael Angelo glared with the frenzy of a kindred inspiration, the gardens in which Lorenzo meditated some sparkling song for the May-day dance of the Etrurian virgins. Alas, for the beautiful city! Alas, for the wit and the learning, the genius and the love!

Le donne, e i cavalier, gli affanni, e gli agi,  
Che ne’ vogliava amore e cortesia  
Là dove i cuor son fatti si malvagi.

A time was at hand when all the seven vials of the Apocalypse were to be poured forth and shaken out over those pleasant countries, a time of slaughter, famine, beggary, infamy, slavery, despair.

The secret of Macaulay’s hold on the literary boy is plain. A boy with any taste for literature always deals in bombast; he loves the mouth-filling word and the rolling period. Does he glory in stately words and cloth-of-gold phrases? He is your budding writer. Those splashings and revellings in the sea of speech declare the swimmer who one day will cut the waves with a clean stroke and an economy of spray. Macaulay’s style is not bombast, but to many a boy it is the foamy and resonant out of literature.

The more I dip into the Essays, the more I doubt whether this is not their greatest use and their greatest merit—that they shout so splendidly round the boy, and cast such treasures at his feet. Macaulay's delight in a full world, a thriving society, and an advanced culture; his prodigious knowledge, his memory, his vocabulary, his health—these are elements in a style that lures the young mind by the broad vigour and symmetry of its operations. Of sentiment and subtlety there are just enough in the Essays to please a boy, which is to say that there is very little of either. Macaulay's grand catalogue of the things that are relieved to just the right extent and in just the right way. A boy had as lief read in Macaulay of the end of London as of the glory of Rome. Hear him take on his lips the famous passage on the permanence of the Roman Catholic Church :

She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple at Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigour when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's.

Macaulay gloated on these vast operations of Time. He wrote, in the essay on Machiavelli :

All the curses denounced against Tyre seemed to have fallen on Venice. Her merchants already stood afar off, lamenting for this great city. The time seemed near when the sea-weed should overgrow her silent Rialto, and the fisherman wash his nets in her deserted arsenal.

And, again, in the "Sir William Temple":

Lewis and Dorothy are alike dust. A cotton-mill stands on the ruins of Marli; and the Osbornes have ceased to dwell under the ancient roof of Chicksands.

Always concrete, rhetorical, and brilliant, always the easy master of his thought—no wonder Macaulay is worshipped by boys. To see him take off his coat to thrash a poet like Montgomery, or a critic like Croker, was sheer ecstasy. So many processes, horizons, relationships, were flashed upon the mind as incidents in the glorious bout; such far glimpses, and such vast suggestions, were opened on every side. You learned by excitement, you grew wise in battle. And then the cult of the "hit," the joy of sarcasm, and—the feelings of Mr. Montgomery!

We would not be understood, however, to say, that Mr. Robert Montgomery cannot make similitudes for himself. A very few lines further on, we find one which has every mark of originality, and on which, we will be bound, none of the poets whom he has plundered will ever think of making reprisals :

"The soul, aspiring, pants its source to mount,  
As streams meander level with their fount."

We take this to be, on the whole, the worst similitude in the world. In the first place, no stream meanders, or can possibly meander, level with its fount. In the next place, if streams did meander level with their founts, no two motions can be less like each other than that of meandering level and that of mounting upwards.

To see Mr. Croker pounded in page after page of cumulative muscle, cumulative scorn, and all in a blaze of erudition beyond the dreams of schoolmasters! How one loved even the minutiae of the onslaught.

Mr. Croker states that Mr. Henry Bate, who afterwards assumed the name of Dudley, was proprietor of the Morning Herald, and fought a duel with George Robinson Stoney, in consequence of some attacks on Lady Strathmore which appeared in that paper. Now, Mr. Bate was then connected, not with the Morning Herald, but with the Morning Post; and the dispute took place before the Morning Herald was in existence. The duel was fought in January, 1777. The "Chronicle" of the Annual Register for that year contains an account of the transaction, and distinctly states that Mr. Bate was editor of the Morning Post. The Morning Herald, as any person may see by

looking at any number of it, was not established till some years after this affair. For this blunder there is, we must acknowledge, some excuse; for it certainly seems almost incredible to a person living in our time that any human being should ever have stopped to fight with a writer in the Morning Post.

All this does not seem too fair now. And really one blushes for the cruelty of the epigram :

It is not likely that a person who is ignorant of what almost everybody knows can know that of which almost everybody is ignorant.

But a boy enjoys this as he does a knock-down blow with the gloves; and he frankly accepts the Titan's explanation :

We did not open this book with any wish to find blemishes in it. We have made no curious researches. The work itself, and a very common knowledge of literary and political history, have enabled us to detect the mistakes which we have pointed out, and many other mistakes of the same kind. We must say, and we say it with regret, that we do not consider the authority of Mr. Croker, unsupported by other evidence, as sufficient to justify any writer who may follow him in relating a single anecdote or in assigning a date to a single event.

Moved by a memory, I have but touched on Macaulay's attraction for boys. His wealth of proper names and allusion was dazzling. Poor Southey's philosophy might stand or fall, but to see that remote scheme condemned by remoter standards was a treat. "A mere day-dream, a poetical creation, like the Domdaniel cavern, the Swerga, or Pandalon."

W.

## Correspondence.

### "On the Eve."

SIR,—Your reviewer, in his notice of Mrs. Atherton's *Senator North* is hardly fortunate in choosing *On the Eve* to bear out his contention that the finest of Turgenev's novels deal but little with love. *On the Eve* is primarily a poignant love story. In none of his books does Turgenev analyse more minutely the heart of a woman who loves. Had your reviewer pointed to *Fathers and Children* or *Virgin Soil* or even *Rudin* he would have been nearer the mark. Obviously he does not know his Turgenev.—

CHRISTOPHER ST. JOHN.

7, Smith-square, Westminster: September 23, 1900.

[Mr. Christopher St. John is, of course, entitled to his views about *On the Eve*. If, however, he is unable to perceive that the political significance of that novel is paramount over everything else in it he is singularly unfortunate. His concluding remark is a hasty and gratuitous assumption on which I will express no opinion.—YOUR REVIEWER.]

### Mr. Eric Mackay.

SIR,—As I am sole possessor of all the letters and legal papers pertaining to the family of the late Dr. Charles Mackay, you will, perhaps, allow me to point out that I am not "wrong in my chronology" with regard to the statement I have made respecting Dr. Mackay's second son, George Eric Mackay. He was born in 1835 (not 1851) and he died in his sixty-fourth year (not at forty-seven). His elder brother is still living and is settled in America with a large family of children and grandchildren, and his own son (living in Italy) is now about forty years of age. And it is quite true that I never made his acquaintance till he returned to his father's house on the failure of his two newspaper ventures, the *Roman Times* (in Rome) and *Il Poliglotta* (in Venice). I was then, as I have stated, a child, studying lessons with a daily governess, and he was forty-five. I regret to trouble you with these personal details, but your correspondent's misleading

remark seems to make it necessary, though I venture to think that the private affairs of a family are out of the province of polite journalism.—I am, &c.,

September 24, 1900.

MARIE CORELLI.

[We regret that we were misled by our correspondent, who, however, seems to have been, in his turn, misled by a work of reference in which the date of Mr. Eric Mackay's birth was incorrectly given as 1851 instead of 1835.]

### "The Minimum of a Decent Personal Library."

SIR,—In all probability it was not Mark Pattison who put the minimum at a thousand volumes, neither was it he who was responsible for the *obiter dictum*: "No one can be said to have a Library at all unless he has at least ten thousand volumes." But if your correspondent will turn to Augustine Birrell's *Essay on "Book-Buying"* (*Obiter Dicta*, Second Series, pages 263-4), he will find the passage he no doubt has in mind: "To be proud of having two thousand books would be absurd. You might as well be proud of having two top-coats. After your first two thousand difficulty begins, but until you have ten thousand volumes the less you say about your Library the better. Then you may begin to speak."

In the same delightful *Essay* Mark Pattison, who had 16,000 volumes, is quoted as saying: "That he had been informed, and verily believed, that there were men of his own University of Oxford who, being in uncontrolled possession of annual incomes of not less than £500, thought they were doing the thing handsomely if they expended £50 a year upon their libraries."—I am, &c.,

September 24, 1900.

JOHN H. RADFORD.

### Our Celtic Fringe.

SIR,—It is possible that you have more readers than one within the "Celtic Fringe" who find themselves shut out from your Literary Competitions. In the place I write from our communication with the rest of the world is maintained by one boat daily. The *ACADEMY* does not reach me until Monday at mid-day; and, at the very earliest, a letter sent from here on Tuesday could not reach London before Wednesday. Is it possible to give us an even chance sometimes? Can you favour us with an opportunity of the chastening penance of failure?—I am, &c.,

CHAS. SMITH.  
Maclean's Land, Tarbert, Lochfyne: Sept. 25, 1900.

### "An Inexact Synonym."

SIR,—I think perhaps "plesionym" may meet the requirements of your correspondent who desires a single word to express an inexact synonym.—I am, &c.,

CLEMENT GUTCH.

Holgate Lodge, York: September 26, 1900.

[Another correspondent suggests "nighrede," "skio-nym," "skialogue," or "parologue."]

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